

“Pure Magic”

Power, Detail, and Refinement—Plus a Touch of Magic

**“breathtaking sound quality
puts many higher-priced
systems to shame”**



Sandy Gross, president of Definitive Technology, is a devoted audiophile who appreciates the sound of today's finest loudspeakers. But what Mr. Gross likes even better than audio exotica is building cleverly-conceived real-world speakers that deliver serious high-end sound at Everyman prices. A perfect example would be Definitive's Mythos ST SuperTowers, which were announced at CES 2007 and are hands down the best-sounding speakers Definitive has ever produced. Now, with the arrival of the Mythos Ten center channel, Definitive is able to offer listeners a complete Mythos ST surround sound package — one whose breathtaking sound quality puts many higher-priced systems to shame.

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FEATURES Definitive's Mythos STs are tall, slender floorstanders housed in solid aluminum enclosures (available in silky-smooth satin silver or black finishes) that attach to polished granite floor plates. Despite their pencil-slim appearance the STs are fullrange speakers with built-in powered subwoofers. Internally, the STs are subdivided into two sections. The top supports a two-way,

"the STs are fullrange speakers with built-in powered subwoofers"

midrange-tweeter-midrange D'Appolito array that handles all frequencies from the mid-bass region on up, while the bottom houses a 300-watt sub based on an unorthodox "racetrack-shaped" woofer flanked by a pair of oblong passive radiators. The sub delivers potent bass that extends down to a claimed 14 Hz.

The matching Mythos Ten center channel essentially takes the top section of the ST, flips it on its side, and stretches the chassis

Ratings

(compared with \$5.5k surround systems)

Transparency and Focus



Imaging and Soundstaging



Tonal Balance



Dynamics



Bass Extension



Bass Pitch Definition



Bass Dynamics



Value



◀ Poor

Good

Excellent ▶

just enough to fit in a pair of oblong passive radiators similar to, but smaller than, those in the ST. The Mythos Ten's bass doesn't go as low as the floorstander's does, but its voicing is identical to the ST's, meaning you'll enjoy seamless speaker-to-speaker transitions when sound effects pan across the front channels.

Completing the system is a pair of Mythos Gem XL surround speakers, also based on two-way, three-driver D'Appolito arrays. The speakers are an earlier-generation design so their drivers are not quite as sophisticated as those used in the STs and the Ten. Even so, the compact Gem XLs could easily qualify as main speakers in most systems, meaning they're more than adequate as surround speakers.

"power, detail, and refinement ... sheer realism that is captivating"

MOVIE PERFORMANCE

The Mythos ST surround system draws together three essential sonic qualities — power, detail, and refinement — that add up to a fourth: a touch of pure magic. Let me explain what this means.

On movie soundtracks, the ST system produces an articulate, neutrally voiced and decidedly muscular sound that absolutely takes command of most listening rooms. In the initial chase seen from *Terminator III: Rise of the Machines*, a deadly robotic Terminatrix (Kristanna Loken) drives a motorized crane, pursuing John Connor (Nick Stahl) and his spouse-to-be (Claire Danes) through crowded city streets. The ST system reproduced the ensuing mayhem of the crane ripping through phone poles, cars and even buildings with terrific vigor and dynamic impact. Yet at the same time the ST rig never lost sight of two key qualities that many systems lack: overarching clarity and low-level detail.

"deep, powerful and lightning-fast bass"

At one point in the chase, for example, the evil Terminator (Loken) attempts to dispose of the good-guy Terminator (Schwarzenegger) by dragging him through the cab of an oncoming fire truck. Through many speaker systems the resulting collision produces nothing more than a generic loud noise, but the ST system — thanks to its superb detail and pitch definition — lets you hear the unmistakably metallic "claaAAank" of the heavy-metal Schwarz-inator plowing into the nose of the truck.

Similarly, in the final shootout scene from *Open Range*, the ST system displays raw power (delivering the ear-splitting "craaccKK" of individual gunshots) as well as impressive textural subtlety. You can hear the ratcheting "clicks" of Colt revolvers being cocked, the sharp "whir" of shards of wood sizzling through the air as shots go astray, and the gentle moan of the prairie wind in the background. The point is, the ST system weaves together small, seemingly insignificant details to create a fabric of sheer realism that is captivating.

"the Definitives will treat you to rare sonic delights you may never have experienced before"

MUSIC PERFORMANCE But as superb as the Mythos ST system is in a home-theater context, it is really at its best with music — and the higher the resolution the better. In fact, the biggest "problem" you might encounter is finding electronics, source components, and recordings good enough to tap its full potential.

Let's start with the basics. The ST system is sensitive and easy to drive, in part because its powered subwoofers shoulder the lion's

share of the bass workload. Further, the ST system offers smooth, neutral tonal balance; delicate and extended highs; deep, powerful, and lightening-fast bass response; and the ability to resolve very fine levels of sonic detail. And therein lies the genius, but also the only potential drawback, of this system.

"one of the rare few systems that sounds great on movies, but even better with music"

The good news is that the ST system can clarify subtle textural and dynamic details that other speaker systems (even quite good ones) are apt to miss. For instance, it shows how soft outdoor sounds — the sound of birds and insects chirping or of a gentle passing breeze — contribute tremendously to the pastoral ambience and overall vibe of "The Park" from Feist's *The Reminder* [Cherrytree /Interscope]. But the not-always-good news is that the Definitives can also reveal sonic shortcomings in associated equipment and recordings. For example, the recording quality on Feist's vocals varies considerably from track to track, ranging from dreamy smoothness on "How My Heart Behaves" to an almost hard-edged sound on the closing chorus of "The Park" (the result of overly close microphone placement). These changes are easily heard. It's not that the STs are finicky, but rather that they are honest; for better or worse, they report whatever they "hear."

"the ST system helps instruments, vocals, and even the recording space come to life in a brilliant way"

When recordings are spot-on, as with Sara Hickman's glowing sweet vocals on "In the Fields" from *Shortstop* [Elektra], the Definitives will treat you to rare sonic

delights you may never have experienced before. On good material, the ST system helps instruments, vocals, and even the recording space come to life in a brilliant way. And because the Mythos STs and Ten center channel use the best tweeters Definitive has ever produced, treble textures and details sound at once clean, yet also smooth (a significant step forward from tweeters Definitive has used in the past). Similarly, bass textures and transients are handled with a wonderful combination of speed, clarity and punch — qualities that rarely travel together in most speakers. With the STs, you'll never have to wonder if bass lines are being played on an acoustic bass, electric bass, or bass synthesizer — you'll just know.

"incredible value ... can put you in the performance ballpark of speaker systems that can carry five-figure price tags, but for about half the cost"

BOTTOM LINE Definitive's Mythos ST system is one of the rare few that sounds great on movies, but even better with music. Exceptionally revealing, the ST package will show you how your system components and favorite movies or music really sound. Don't be surprised to hear rich new layers of detail. In simple terms, the Mythos ST system can put you in the performance ballpark of speaker systems that carry five-figure price tags, but for about half the cost. TPV

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The Leader in High-Performance Loudspeakers®

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The Perfect Vision Winter 2008 issue.

The Last Word



- Refined and remarkably detailed sound
- Deep, powerful, lightning-fast bass
- Very easy to drive
- Incredible value



- Shortcomings in recordings and other system components are exposed
- You'll need top-flight gear (and recordings) to hear this system at its best

Specifications:

Mythos ST Home Theater Speakers

Mythos ST

- Driver complement 1" aluminum-dome tweeter, two 5.25" mid-bass drivers, one 6" x 10" oval woofer, two 6" x 10" passive radiators
- Frequency response: 14 Hz – 30 kHz
- Built-in subwoofer amp: 300 watts
- Sensitivity: 93 dB
- Impedance: 4 – 8 ohms
- Dimensions 6.75" x 51.5" x 9.5"
- Weight: 70 lb.
- Price: \$3598/pair

Mythos Ten

- Driver complement: Same tweeter and mid-bass drivers as ST, but with two 5" x 8" passive radiators
- Frequency response: 31 Hz – 30 kHz
- Sensitivity: 92 dB
- Impedance: 4 – 8 ohms
- Dimensions: 34.5" x 6" x 4.375"
- Weight: 16.7 lb.
- Price: \$899

Mythos Gem XL

- Driver complement: 1" aluminum-dome tweeter, two 4.5" mid-bass drivers
- Frequency response: 50 Hz – 30 kHz
- Sensitivity: 89 dB
- Impedance: 4 – 8 ohms
- Dimensions: 4.5" x 12.625" x 5.5"
- Weight: 7.25 lb.
- Price: \$698/pair

Total System Price: \$5195

Manufacturer Info

410-363-7148

definitivetech.com